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HIGHLIGHTS OF FOREST PEST CONDITIONS IN THE MARITIMES IN MID-JUNE 1992

We begin another summer season with the first in a series of reports in which we will highlight forest pest conditions of significance in the Maritimes. This report covers the period up to mid-June, 1992. Subsequent reports will update the stories as they develop. More detailed information is available on request.

Announcement - We are happy to announce the newest member of the Forest Insect and Disease Survey staff, Gérard Lemieux, who joined the crew on June 1st. As our newest FIDS Ranger, Gérard will be jumping into the frying pan, so to speak, in acquainting himself with the considerable diversity of forest pest problems. Some of our New Brunswick cooperators may encounter him this summer - say hello!

Weather effects have been among our most significant conditions. Tree and insect phenology is approximately 1 week behind normal in New Brunswick and 2 weeks behind in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. **Precipitation** has been far below normal and, although the effects are not usually manifested until some time later, it is noteworthy that for the month of May, the Maritimes received approximately 40% of its normal complement of rain. **Frost,** for a couple of nights in late May, caused widespread, severe damage to tender shoots and new leaves of beech and oak at several locations in southern New Brunswick.

Gypsy moth larvae have been found at Oak Hill and the Ledge Road, Charlotte County, New Brunswick, with no noticeable defoliation.

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Forest tent caterpillar has caused moderate and severe defoliation to trembling aspen in York, Sunbury, Queens, and Kent counties. The area of defoliation is greater than last year but remains patchy. Aerial surveys will be conducted to determine the extent of damage. Forest tent larvae have also been "turning up" in other areas of the region, at locations in Northumberland, Charlotte, and Victoria counties in New Brunswick, and Prince County, Prince Edward Island, although no noticeable defoliation could be found.

Balsam twig aphid populations have increased significantly in natural stands and Christmas tree plantations in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Moderate and severe levels of damage to current shoots are commonplace, creating serious control problems for the region's Christmas tree growers.

Aspen leafrollers, a complex of as many as six species, have caused moderate and severe leafrolling damage on trembling aspen in several areas of Carleton, Victoria, Madawaska, western Restigouche, and northwestern York counties, New Brunswick. Areas affected were most often patches of a few trees, but one location, at St. Leonard, Madawaska County, was approximately 3 ha. Most trembling aspen, with severe leafrolling, were of non-merchantable age but semi-mature trees with moderate and severe leafrolling were frequently found.

Eastern tent caterpillar nests on cherry and apple were noticeably more common in southern New Brunswick than last year. Nests were found as far north as Victoria and Northumberland counties, though only rarely. In Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, tent caterpillar nests were at similar levels to those of last year, i.e., only a few.

Larch casebearer was very common in areas of the southern half of New Brunswick and throughout mainland Nova Scotia, moderately and severely "scorching" trees of all age classes. Prince Edward Island had similar injury levels as last year, at trace and light levels on few trees.

Other forest pests of note: **poplar serpentine leafminer** causing severe discoloration from leafmining in northeastern N.B.; **jack pine needle rust** continued to infect needles at moderate and severe levels in a plantation in Sunbury County, N.B.; **birch casebearer** caused severe foliage browning to birches near Florenceville, Carleton County, N.B.; **oak leafroller** has caused generally light damage to date, in southwestern N.S.

J.E. Hurley and L.P. Magasi
Forest Insect and Disease Survey

June 17, 1992